

A  
Church-Covenant

Lawfull and needfull to be entred-  
into by all, that intend to walk in Church-  
fellowship according to Gospel-order.

Having tasted the sweetness of that  
*everlasting Covenant* God in Christ hath made  
with His people, *ordered in all things and sure;*  
and can say of it as *David* did, tasting his Words as  
he did, sweeter than the honey, the first  
droppings of the honey-combe,  
*This is ALL my salvation,*  
*and ALL my desire.*

---

*Quis pacto credit, & pactum negat?* who beleeves the Covenant  
of his God, and refuseth to enter Covenant with his God?  
He, that finds himselfe concerned in it, will engage unto it, the  
keeping the Conditions of it, in His strength, who hath promi-  
sed to enable for it, and to stand unto it.

*Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His  
ways, and to hearken unto His voice. And the Lord hath avouched  
thee this day to be His peculiar people, and to make thee high above  
all nations, which He hath made in praise, and in name, and in ho-  
nour, and that thou maist be an Holy people unto the Lord thy God,  
as He hath spoken; Deut. 26. 17, 18, 19.*

*I will Cause him to draw neere, and he shall approach unto mee: for  
who is he, that engaged his heart to approach unto mee, saith the  
Lord, Jer. 30. 21.*

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T O  
THE MINISTERS  
of the Gospel, the Glory of  
Christ, called, chosen, and faithfull,  
*pretious* in your Lords eyes, and  
ever since *honourable*.

S I R S;



He Author, in behalfe of a few  
Names, charged too rashly by a  
Godly Minister, (as is meet for  
Him to think, for a Godly man  
may be rash, but he will quickly  
bethink himselfe of his rashness and repent) to  
*walk by a fancie*, not walking, which is the ab-  
horring of their soules to doe, in the *broad*, or  
Rolle way of the Nation; in point of Church  
Communion, or Gospel administrations, The  
giving out the *figures* and *seales* of the Covenant,  
To old-men in Covenant with sinne and death,  
drawned in their villanies, *accused* by the Lord;  
To yong-men strong and stout against the Lord  
and His Christ, who never take the *glorious* and  
fearefull NAME, The LORD, Thy God, into  
their mouths, *but in name*; nor make mention

## THE EPISTLE.

of *Christ and His precious blood* (A simple folk are commonly mistaken here) not as to the substance of it, that is spilt and perished, and if we had it, as some say they have, it could not wash us, but defile us, as our blood would, but *pretious* as to the glorious Merit of it, being the *blood of God-man* never making the least mention, of *Christ and His blood* (the Churches Treasure; for it is their Righteousness, as our blood is our sinfulness) but in an *oath*: To *Babes* in understanding, who, take them altogether, *old and yong*, and *Babes*, are as wholly ignorant of *Christ*, and of the *Covenant of God* established in His Blood, as are the *Babes* they present to *Baptism*: This Author, he was saying, made his Address unto you at the first, Craving your righteous judgement in these matters; Also as to a Church-way, and their walk therein, who walk together well agreed in Gospel-fellowship, *Whether their way is not, as a Cansey way, paved out before them in the Holy Scriptures?* And

Now at the last, and full close of his undertaken Task, work of Faith, and labour of love, he taketh the boldness againe to make Application unto you, Craving your judgement, which, he is assured shall be, according to Truth,



## D E D I C A T O R Y,

as before about a Church-way, so now about a Church-Covenant (that Apple of strife, and bone of offence cast-in among the Churches, he sayes not by whom, but he sayes *the hand of—Joab is with them in all this*, and therefore, the more earnestly he craves your judgement in this matter ) " whether, ( there being a Communion of Saints on earth, who, through the supply of the Spirit, are still maintaining their fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ ) " these may not, yea ought not, in the strength of Christ, enter into Covenant each with other, and all with God, so to doe ? Briefly, " whether the Oath of the Covenant ( that is, in the strength of Christ, to stand to it ) may not " be taken once, as well as the seales thereof, of- " ten ? he would adde, yea taken first, if time " serve, and persons are so agreed, before the " seales are taken ? Herein he craves your righteous judgement, And humbly craves leave to adde, or rather entreats you to adde it for him what you read spoken in a case very different, but not more weighty and momentous, *Take heed what ye doe : for ye judge not for man but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgement.*

This is all he commends to your thoughts, which, he seares not will be lesse serious, because offered

# THE EPISTLE &c.

offered unto you with a trembling hand, because by so inferior a person, as if, (it was a proverb once) he had been offering to an Elephant, and not to such he knows you to be, as well the Sheep of Christ meek and gentle, can beare, beleewe, hope, endure all things, according to the right sense and meaning thereof, being clothed with charity, as ye are with humility: he was saying, as well the Sheep of Christ as ye are His Shepherds. Notwithstanding, his heart should tremble more than his hand, Considering wisely the weight of the matter he craves your judgment-in, The oath of the Covenant being as momentous almost, as the scales are, and they are Tremenda mysteria. But indeed, this causeth his feare, least any thing should be taken amiss by you, or don uncomely by him, such a Nothing as indeed he that tendereth this unto you

is  
And humbly craves your  
judgment, and rather craves  
you to add to it, than  
to take it away.  
HEZEKIAH WOODWARD.  
But not more weighty and momentous,  
and more for me, than for  
the Lord, who is the Judge  
of the world, and the  
Judge of the living and  
the dead.

READER,



Possible thou maist be one of a few  
into whose hands this may come.  
If so, know (1) There was good  
reason, if not a necessity of prin-  
ting this, That whereas there  
must be half an hundred Copies  
thereof, we might have an hundred of them or  
more with less labour, and not much more cost.  
And who knows whether thou maist not be one  
of those few among many, that hast been instruc-  
ted to this discretion, To make a vertue of neces-  
sity in this case also, proving all things: holding  
fast that which is good. Thou knowest (2) if  
thou art not a stranger in our Israel; nor to the  
life of Israel; We living God in the midst of Il-  
rael; That there is nothing in the world except  
the power of Godliness, because it is a God-  
likeness, so much struck as (not to say contra-  
dicted by the good, and blasphemed by the evil,  
if it were considerable as to this matter, what the  
last doe) as a Church-Covenant is. Now we pro-  
fess heartily we see no more reason (possible it  
may be conceived to be, for want of that eye-  
sight) (have)

1  
false) why good men should stick at it, we mean  
to receive the oath of the Covenant, than they  
doe, to receive the seales of the Covenant: or  
than they should stick at this, the going to God in  
prayer and praises: for we know, that  
praying and praising is but an inward enga-  
ging their hearts to, and Covenanting with God;  
for suppose we should heare such words as these,  
would they not be an abhorring to us, if we  
unto Thee, LORD, for what I would have,  
and praise thee for what I have, but I will not  
engage unto Thee, I am resolved to be free  
(speak-out man, what thou meanest, by being  
“free? it followes) so as when the Prince of this  
“world comes in the allurements of the lust of  
“the flesh, the lust of the eye, and pride of life,  
“I may be free to engage to whom I please, which  
“will be to him, that maketh the fullest and best  
“rest offer, and gives it presently, putting it as  
“into my hand. This now is plaine English, and  
his, who will not engage to his God, that he may  
be free, that is, free from Righteousnes, the ser-  
vant of sin, and the Devills bond-slave: for we  
must engage to the one or the other, we cannot  
have two, no more than we can engage unto two  
Masters.  
(That we may prepare thy care for that, which  
fol-

followes, we will goe-on a litle ; Know then for  
 thy good, That neither the God of Israel, nor the  
 god of the world, whom the world hath made  
 so, can indure a servant halting between two  
 Masters, he must stand bent to one with his  
 back upon th' other. Know also, That the Lord  
 Christ, who so loved His people, as one sick with  
 love indeed, giving Himself for them, and wash-  
 ing them in His blood, cannot endure a luke-  
 warme person, neither hot nor cold, a midling  
 person ; he will not engage to Christ, nor professed-  
 ly against Him ; he will be for Him in shew, a-  
 gainst Him indeed. The Lord Christ cannot en-  
 dure this man ; He will spue him out of His  
 mouth. Worthy Brightmans words follow, "We  
 " must take heed, we wrest not similitudes beyond  
 " their scope. What is this then to be spewed out  
 " of His mouth ? Will Christ, in whose mouth  
 " the Truth it selfe doth reside, take away His  
 " Truth from this ( luke-warme person ) giving  
 " him over into absurd opinions, and that he  
 " should againe beleewe a lye ? The itching de-  
 " fire indeed, that many have at this day, to  
 " broach againe to the people monstrous opinions,  
 " and such as have been already bisshed-out, doth  
 " make this interpretation probable. We know  
 " what hath been taught within these few year's

Gal. 2. 20.

Eph. 5. 25,

26.

Rev: 1. 3.

Rev: 3. 16.

" in the Schooles, preached usually in Sermons  
 " ( there is nothing now, that is NEW, it  
 " hath been already of old time, which was  
 " before us ) disputed publicly at Commence-  
 " ments, and what it is, that was put in print, the  
 " last summer. I cannot tell what to say certainly  
 " of this matter. The event shall ere long make it  
 " plaine. In the meane time let us know, That  
 " this punishment shall be very dreadfull; for  
 " first, Christ shall take pleasure in casting away  
 " this luke-warme person from Himselfe; for  
 " what more acceptable to a man, that is stomach-  
 " sick with eating meat, he now loatheth, than to  
 " vomit it-up, and so to be eased of that, which  
 " causeth his sickness? Even as Moses threat-  
 " neth, unto the Jewish Apostat's, That the Lord  
 " would even io rejoyce, to destroy them, and  
 " to cut them off, as He did before that rejoyce  
 " in doing them good. Secondly, That He will  
 " cast out this person with great reproach, for an  
 " unclean place is sought for to vomit-in, Third-  
 " ly, That this person shall never receive his  
 " former dignitie, he shall never be received-in  
 " againe, he shall be an abhorred person, as we our  
 " vomit, we have cast out. I come yet closer to the  
 " thing in hand, and so to draw to a conclusion here,  
 " Take we heed of this Middle Temper. It is dan-  
 " gerous

Deu: 28. 36.

gerous to our Bodies. We have heard an healthfull person say; It is not with me as it hath been, I am not sick, nor am I well; within a few dayes after, he fell dangerously sick, and unto death: so, a luke-warme person in the matters of His God, will grow quickly, a key-cold person.

We will adde but this for the preparing of the eare; If we look that God should avouch us for His people, we must avouch Him for our God.

God saith to Abraham, Ile be thy Shield and exceeding great Reward, and not another for Mee; Gen. 15. 1.

Ile be so to thee My self, Ile approve My self a God Allsufficient to thee, There is Gods engagement: Thou shalt walk before Me and be perfect, there is Abrahams engagement. He sayes to

His Israel, to every one, in whose heart is no guile; Thou art my people, Ile take thee for My own, and so Ile engage to thee My promise, Gen. 17. 1.

and My oath; Ile give thee faithfull witnesses besides, the Sunne and the Moone: so the Lord saith, and so He engageth; So must Israel to

Him, for th' engagement is mutuall, as election, when it is made knowne; and love is, when it is

shed adrood in the heart; we choole Him; we love Him; we engage to Him; All betwixt God

& His Israel is reciprocall; so is this engagement too; Thou art my people saith the Lord; And

they



Hof. 2. 23.  
3. 3.

they shall say, Thou art my God; I am for Thee, saith the Lord; I will not be for another, say His people, as their Lord saith, they shall not. What God saith, He will sweare too, I have sworne unto David. We shall heare anon David swearing unto Him. It is mutuell; it is reciprocall; The summe is this, when God makes His promise to us; He be your God, He tendreth His yoke to us also, You must be my people, drawing together in that yoke, if not, ye are Children of Belial, saith the Lord, no more in Covenant with Me, nor I with you, no more than children of the Ethiopians are. In the last place, and to shut up.

Know (3) That the Author in his last Treatise pag. 59. hath made mention of a Church-Covenant, And the lawfullness, in the strength of God, to engage thereunto. The speciall service then that these papers are engaged upon, relates to our selves specially, to hold-out (1.) the reasonableness and equity, yea the necessity of a Church-Covenant, for all them that walk in Church-fellowship. (2.) To resolve one th' other, as to the exceptions against it, rendring it, as we could, and was our duty to doe, as plaine and cleare before us as was possible to doe, that we might each of us ponder it well, and muse on it; which could  
not

not possibly be don by us, but by making it as legible as thou see'st it. Also

Sith than (4) it hath chanced so, That thou hast met with it, much good may it do thee. Every private person should be a publick good; then no publick person should be a private good, for that were as sad as it is uncomely. We intend but this, If a person or thing be good, the more common, the more good.

We will point to his words and close with them here and hereafter, where we shall set them down, having such full weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary; "The Lord give us to beleewe, "yea to taste the goodness and sweetness, of this "engaging our selves the Lords people, and "we shall be humbled before the Lord, that we "ever with-stood it.



# The engagement of fellow-helpers to the Truth, walking together in Gospel fellowship.

Ten Questions, with their Answers, are premised, whereby to give a good understanding, as to this engagement. ( 1 ) What it is. ( 2 ) How lawfull it is. ( 3 ) What manner of persons they must be, who doe engage. ( 4 ) What they must engage-in; In whose strength, and for what ends.

Q. 1.

Ans.



Hat it is to engage; or what is this engaging work?

It is a solemne free and voluntary promising, or avowing our selves, the servants of the most High God, *subscribing* our names, and *engaging* our soules unto Him, to hold fellowship with Him, walking together as friends, and well agreed. More briefly, it is this, An engaging our hearts for our Lord and Christ: And against all that most, which is most contrary to Him. In a word, It is an avouching of God for our God, and our selves the Lords people.

a Isa. 44. 5.  
b Jer. 20. 21.  
c 1 Joh. 1. 3.  
d Amos 3. 3.

2 Chro 23. 16.

For the clearing this first Question we will take in what may scruple or offend the weak, and in passage, remove it, as we can. And

" If this engaging our selves the Lords people must be free and voluntary, what say we to that Covenant, which was thrust upon the people, every one knowes where?

To this we say ( 1 ) That we would say nothing to it at all, aske

aske them, who can better resolve you than can the most knowing among us Yet for the sake of them that are *weak*, we would say this (2) That this is nothing to the busines or Question in hand: we are holding forth a *Church-Covenant*, and how reasonable a thing it is, That all, who are truly and indeed of the *Church of Christ*, and walking in fellowship together, should *engage to Christ*. (3) We would say for our own satisfaction, who are as *weak* as the weakest (others may say and think as they please) That *Covenant* had so many ingredients in it, it was so full of mixture, as that an haile, strong and healthy stomach might, haply nauseate at it. Therefore (4) It should not, we humbly conceive, have been pressed upon the people, specially because the chiefe *Article* therein, or *Head* thereof was not understood by us (the most of us) and then we could not enter into *Covenant* about it, nor *swear* in judgement.

But had it been a *simple Covenant*, we meane with-out mixture as *Asa's* was to seek the *LORD GOD* of *Israel* with all  
 2-Chro. 15. 12 their hearts, and with all their soule; or that they should be the  
 23. 16 *LORDS* people as *Jehojada's* was, we would Querie here, might it have been pressed upon the people? The Answer to this makes something for the clearing the busines or question in hand; but we will take it in to our answer unto the sixth Question, onely this we would say more here, because we are upon engaging; What may be said to that engagement charged upon the people some yeares since? To this we say, much more might be said, for the pressing of that engagement (though some thought themselves then, and so doe now, oppressed by it, grossly if not sinfully mistaken, we think) than can be said for the pressing, of the other said *Covenant*, which was, we know not well what it was; but partly *Religion* it was, and partly *Civill*. But this engagement was meerey *Civill*; and as reasonable as reason it selfe, That our *Rulers* engaging to us to doe all they could for us, we should againe engage to all we could for them, at least, to doe nothing against them. Why? the *Bramble* it self would have the *Trees* engage to Him, the best thing they had, their *Faith*, and their *Troth*, as we too commonly say, their very *Jewell*; and he is a beggarly man, that layes that to pawn; If in truth ye anoint me King over you come and put your *TRUST* under my shadow; It selfe to as much

much as this; *If you will make me your Ruler or Parliament Man*, you must engage to Me your *Trust*; We must come-up to the termes of the *Bramble*, in *Civill* matters or *civill Trust*. Surely it was but *right* and *good*, That our Rulers should engage us to as much as the *Bramble*, did the other *Trees*. If they will give him the Title of a King, they must give him, the honour of a King.

But now, which we would think might answer all that can be said against our engaging to God, whereof more will be said anon. If we take Him for our *Lord* and *Christ*, all the Reason in the world we should engage our *Trust* unto Him, and that is our *All*, a serious profession of our faithfullness to God, and *adhering* to His wayes. Look what the Man is, such is his *Trust*, if he be earthly and sensuall, his *Trust* is the same; If heavenly and spirituall, such is his *Trust* also; Holy men, as well as Holy women, are described by this, *They Trusted in God*; which *Trust* in a large sense, is put for the whole Compasse of our duty to Him; And in the strictest sense, it is a great part of Divine worship, because it is the highest exercise of Faith in God, giving the highest honour to Him. Now if this *Trust* be in us, it will be professed by us, being like *fire* there; besides we seldom or never being called forth unto it, make profession of lesse than we have, but of as much as we have, as the wicked professe more. The short of this matter is, If this *Trust* be in us, we cannot but make serious and hearty profession of it, engaging our selves to Him, who by His Word and Spirit wrought it in us. If our *Trust* be right set on God and selling, we cannot be ashamed thereof, for that shall never make us ashamed — But so much for the clearing our Answer to the first Question: we proceed.

Q: II. Is this lawfull to be don?

Ans: We think he that makes this question is ashamed to speak it-out, "Is it lawfull to engage our selves to God, to be the *Lords* people, to walk and live as His people? surely yes, and never, we think, did any one of the *LORDS* people make question here. Yet if he did, this may put it out of question, because The *Lord God* hath promised, yea sworne unto His people, He will be *their God*, work in them and for them, as their God in Covenant with them. It's but reason now, and altogether just, That they

1 Pet. 3. 5.

- Psal. 56. 12. should promise and sweare unto Him, to walke as His people,  
 who have the *vowes of God upon them*; For can we think, and  
 think as men, That the most High God, should bind Himself o-  
 ver to His people, with His own Coards, *promise and oath*, those  
 Heb. 6. 18. two *immutable things*, while yet His people stand loose from Him,  
 not suffering themselves to be bound with the *Coards of a man*,  
 with *bands of love*, a gracious God and mercifull Father hath pro-  
 Math. 11. 29. vided for them, and calleth them, *My Comandements*, and *My*  
 30. *yok*, and makes them to all His, not *greivious*, but *easse* and  
 1 Joh. 5. 3. *light*?

Q: III. But may Gods people doe what they read and heare  
 God hath don?

- Ans:* Yes; All things commanded and made possible for them  
 to doe. In all such things, they must *learne of Him*, and doe as  
 they heare and read He hath don. As in this Case. They must  
 avow themselves His servants, as He hath vowed Himself their  
 Lord; and to walk as His people who hath cholen them for His  
 people, *even as He walked*, and *follow God as deare Children*,  
 1 Job. 2. 6. Eph. 5. 1. He hath made a promise unto them, and  
 to evidence the immutability thereof, He hath ratified it with an  
 oath, and given witnesses and pledges, the *Sunne* and the *Moone*  
 for the Continuance and endurance of the same thing He promi-  
 sed and sware unto. Surely Gods people stand bound to bind  
 themselves as strongly, as possible can be, to Him againe. And so  
 much the rather because the *flesh*, the unregenerate part, in the  
 Regenerate person is still ready to draw back, like a *bullock unac-*  
 35. *customed to the yoke*, or like that which was to be bound with *Cords*  
 to the *horns of the Altar*. This *flesh* cannot abide bands and coards  
 of Gods making, but saith still as once it did, for the flesh can  
 speake no other language, being not of it selfe *subject to the law of*  
 God, *neither indeed can be*; Let us break their bands asunder, and  
 Rom. 8. 7. cast away their cords from us. The flesh is all for this, and this it  
 is craving all the day long, give me *ease and liberty*, though it will  
 prove *little ease* anon, (which we translate *Anguish*, straightnesse  
 Rom. 2. 9. of place) and a *curfed liberty*. Yet give me it saith the flesh.  
 Truly it would endure no more than the *Devill & Satan* would,  
 to be bound, unlesse with its own Cords of *vanity*, which at pre-  
 sent are pleasant Coards, binding now as it would be bound; but  
 anon.



anon it shall be bound as it would not, as with *fetters*, and held with the *Cords of affliction*, which it selfe hath twisted. Indeed it dearly loves, as was said, a *curst* liberty, and would know no other *law* but that, which *rules in its members*. Therefore we conclude, The flesh must be strongly bound to its good behaviour, there being no such professed Rebell, than this is in the whole world, or the Nationall Church there. And not to speak better of our parts than they doe deserve, as they are ours, and not overpowred, these deserve bands too, and to be laid upon them by Him, who onely can make them binding.

Job 36. 8.  
Pro. 5. 12.

Q. IV. Is it safe then for the people of God to lay bands or engagements upon that in them is called flesh, as, in some sense, the *mind* may be said to be, having something of the *flesh* there.

Col. 2. 13.

Ans: We conceive the reason of this question is, because it is commonly said, That this laying engagements upon the *flesh*, and making its *watch* strong, is like the *Law opposed to a lust*, it irritateth and provoketh the *flesh*; or it is as a boundary or stop set against an impetuous streame, it puts some stoppage to it, but it makes the waters swell and roare; or like that restraint upon *Shimei*, 1 Kings 2. 36. or as we may have heard, was laid upon another, who was an old-man, yet never went five miles from the place he was borne, his Ruler hearing that laid a restraint upon him, that he, that would not, for after time should not; But the Man was not at rest till he had that restraint taken off. And we read what *Shimei* did. There is a truth in this, we like not to be bound, but then, if we lay no bounds upon the flesh, we shall run riot after the flesh, as the manner is, like a *wild Ass-colt*, or like a pampered horse, that hath cast his Rider: if we doe lay bands upon the flesh (woe unto us if we doe not) It will fret kick and rage, and be very troublous, yet is it kept within bounds, like fire upon the hearth; but take off the bands, let flesh doe all its pleasure, what is *right in its own eyes*, it never doth more wrong to the soul. It will be like a fire raging upon the house-tops. We would come closer to the thing in hand.

Rom. 7. 7.

Grant we then, as well it cannot be denied, That bands laid upon the flesh, as the *law* forbidding or opposing a *lust*, makes the flesh for a time more impetuous and storme-like, yet doth not all this, as we conceive, so much as *accidentally* cause more *corrupti-*

ens in us, and procure more sin, but makes them or it more *some-*  
*out its own shame*, so making sin *appeare*, in its likeness *sin*, and  
 become *exceeding sinfull*, and so, *accidentally*, procureth more sin  
 ( to break-out, which lay hid before ) and so more *guilt*, and mat-  
 ter of Condemnation. But yet all this speakes nothing, at least  
 proves nothing against this laying *bands* or *engagements* upon the  
 flesh, but rather is mighty through God, to prevaile with us, to  
 make the *bands* firmer, and the *watch* stronger; Remembring this  
 for our comfort, that the people of God are delivered from the  
*irruating* or provoking power of the *Law* ( as well as from the  
 Curse thereof ) so far as that it shall doe them no *hurt* at all, but  
 much good.

So then to bring our answer nearer to the question, we say it  
 is very *safe* and *sure* to lay bands upon the *flesh*, and *spirit* both;  
 for, as was said, it is in some part *flesh* too. ( 1 ) It is *safe*; for the  
 laying *bands* upon the *flesh* is the great meanes appointed by God  
 to safeguard the *Spirit*, the renewed part in the *New-Man*. And  
 if it be not don, and with all care and diligence, *flesh* will after the  
 manner, run-riote in the day time, and like a child, sent away, or  
 sent to himselfe, that is, left to himselfe, and put into his own hands,  
 bringeth the Spirit to shame, as he, that ungoverned child, his  
 Mother, yea and his Father too ( take it in passage ) though the  
 Mother be there onely named, because she, usually, is most to  
 blame in that matter. Therefore if we looke to find all *fast* and  
*sure*, shut we the gates, doores and windowes of our soules, as  
 carefully as we doe those at night, belonging to our houses, and  
 when we must set them wide open, set we a good *guard* about  
 them, and make we our watch strong. It was spoken, in mockage,  
 we may be serious in mentioning of it. " See ! He dares not Trust  
 " a *Believer* to walke without his keeper, the law, as if he judged  
 " no otherwise of him, than of a *Malefactor* in *New-gate*, who  
 " would kill and rob if his Jailor were not with him. Truly the  
*flesh* of a *Believer*, and we beleeve he will say so too, is no more to  
 be trusted than a *Malefactor* in *New-gate*; therefore he walketh  
 not without his keeper, and he prayeth to God *continually*, that  
 He would keep both him and his keeper, and then he is kept.  
 We proceed ( 2 ) It is *safe* and *sure* for *Believers* to lay engage-  
 upon the *flesh*, for by the *sure mercies of David*, which never fail-  
 led,

led, it is a sanctified meanes to keep all *sure* till they come to that inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that *fadeth not away*, reserved in heaven for them, where there will be no enemies to annoy them. And ( 3 ) for the *Spirit* renewed, so we suppose it to be, it hath its *filthinesse* <sup>a</sup> also, even its *moueth* ( we speak of that <sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. 7. 1. we call *st:sh* in the New Creature, *wherein dwelleth no good* <sup>b</sup> ) <sup>b</sup> Rom. 7. 18. *devoureth iniquity* <sup>c</sup>; It would drink it-in as greedily as a *thirsty* <sup>c</sup> Pro. 19. 28. *Beast water* <sup>d</sup>; Therefore even the *Spirit* must have a *guard* <sup>d</sup> Job 11. 16. engaged upon it also to keep it in the strength of God, fast and sure. It requireth our observation *sure*, as it surely argueth the Treachery of our spirits, That the *Holy Ghost* by His Prophet makes Mal. 2. 15, 16. this Inference once and againe, *Therefore take heed to your spirit*; as if He had said, you observe nothing if you doe not observe your spirit; *Therefore take heed to your spirit*. We find sometimes the same words repeated <sup>a</sup>, and then they should come with much <sup>a</sup> Pro. 19 5. 9. force upon our spirits, and to ascertaine us of the good, in the doing of it; as of the evill in neglecting of it. *The dreame was doubled twice, because the thing is established by God*; so, This Inference is doubled; *Therefore take heed to your spirit*, because it is commanded and established by God, it must be so don, or else you be utterly undone. And so much to that question.

*Q. V.* Can it be held-out from the Holy Scriptures, that this *Covenanting* or *swearing to God to walke before Him*, to keep close to Him, hath been the practise or manner of Gods people in former times?

*Ans:* It is holy, right and good we should aske Counsell at that *Abel*, enquire what the *Scripture* saith, and so resolve our selves and end the matter, we will then set down some Scriptures at length, because some are so negligent, that they will not be at the labour to turne to them in their *Bibles*, which will informe us what the servants of the Lord have don alone, and apart, then what they have don in Company and Fellowship one with th'other. And when we have so don the Reader shall be Judge in this matter, so be he will engage in these two things, ( 1 ) That he will look into those Scriptures, so much he will doe, he may say, for it is the easiest thing in the world so to doe, to look into them. No, that is a deceit, It is the hardest thing, nay more, it is impossible for a man not changed, nor renewed, nor looking after that glo-

glorious work, impossible for him ( how sharp-sighted soever he may think himselfe, for his knowledge, learning, prudence, wisdome ) to *look* into, that is, To understand savingly, one jote, of sacred Truth. His darknesse doth marvellously benight him ;  
 " The corruption of his affections *fumes-up* into his understanding ; and *streames* in the lower faculties doe cast a *mist* on the higher. So then it is a conclusion of experience, That the heart must be *cleane*, else the *Head* cannot be *cleare* to apprehend " the *Truth*, as it is in *Iesus*. For as long as the *heart* is so desperately distempered, the *Head* can never be duly Disposed for the reception of such a Thing as Truth is, which is so contrary as light and darknesse are, to a wicked mans *lye* ; we meane his *whole Religion*, being all as his *ways* are, but a *lye* ; for as all the *Popish religion*, with all the *Faith-devouring*, and *Conscience-wasting-errors* that ever the *Man* of sin vented to the world, are *wrapt-up* in this *one syllable* or word, a *lye* ; so also is all our Religion, as are our *wayes*, naught else but a *lye*, while we are our selves out of the *way*, and not changed or renewed in the spirit of our minds by the glorious work of the Spirit with His Word ; Till this work be wrought, every *lust* in us is an enemy to every *Truth* as it is in *Iesus*, and will doe its utmost to keep it-out, that it may enjoy its selfe with more security in the dark. So then to come to a close of the first thing we would engage the Reader in, we would in the next place shew the emphasis, force, or how significant that word is, we translate *look into*, for it denotes such a *prying* into a thing, as the blessed Angells, prying into the glorious mysteries of the glorious Gospel, whereby the *unsearchable Riches of Christ*, are held-out to us, *immortality and life brought to light*. It is such a looking as Commands the bending of the *Body* and *Spirit* both before the *Father of spirits*. And

James 1. 25.  
 1 Per. 1. 12.  
 μαρτυροῦμεν.

Therefore ( 2 ) He must engage to look-up and cry for that *Anointing*, that *teacheth all things* ; For it is in vaine to look into these, or any other Scriptures, with-out that *eye-salve*, which unscals the eye, reveales the eare, opens the understanding, in a word, unvailles the heart, that we may see what we see, heare what we heare, understand what we read, all which is don by, That *Guide* or *Interpreter* onely, supposing now the Reader hath engaged hetherto, these are the Scriptures which we will set down at length,

Act. 8. 30, 31.

*length*, as we said, and then passe on to the next Question.

"And *Jacob* vowed a vow saying If God will be with me, and  
"will keep me in this way that I goe, and will give me bread to  
"eat, and raiment to put on, *then shall the LORD BE MY* Gen 28.20, 21  
22.  
Jacobs vow.  
*GOD*—

"And *Hannah* vowed a vow and said, O *LORD of HOSTS*, 1 Sam. 1. 11.  
Hannahs vow.  
"if thou wilt indeed look on the Affliction of thine Hand maid,  
"and remember me, and not forget thine Hand-maid, but wilt  
"give unto thine Hand-maid a Man-child, then I will give him  
"unto the *LORD* all the dayes of his life; there shall no Razor  
"come upon his head.

"I have sworne and I will performe it: that I will keep Thy  
"Righteous Judgements. Davids vow.  
Psa. 119. 105.

Thus the Saints did severally and apart; and who sees not —  
but we forget our selves; It is left to the Reader to judge ( so he  
keep the Conditions,) whether it be not the Duty of Saints so to  
doe now ?

Then againe, *Come with us say the wicked. Come with us, say the* Prov. 1. 11.  
*Godly*, let us joyne together as one Man, in one thing to promote  
the *Glory of God, His Church, and His Truth*. We beleieve verily  
the Reader will judge it as comely for the Godly to joyne to-  
gether, for God in one and the same thing, as it is for the wicked  
to joyne together, plaisted together like thornes, against God,  
and His Christ, and against all that which is truely and indeed  
*Christian*. Surely the Spirit of God is as prevailing ( we should  
say *infinitely more* ) with His servants, as is the *spirit of the world*  
with that *whole world, that lyeth in wickednesse*: for the evidencing  
of this, *LOOK* we, as has been said, into these Scriptures.

"And they entred into Covenant, and sware unto the Lord,  
"to seek the *Lord God* of their fathers, with all their heart, and  
"with all their soule. Ajs's Cove-  
nant.  
2 Chro. 15: 12.

"And *Jehojada* made a Covenant between him and between  
"all the people, that they should be the *LORDS* people. Jehijada's Co-  
venant.  
2 Chr 23. 16.  
1 Chr. 29. &  
30.

King *Hezekiah* proclaiming a *Passover*, sending his posts from  
City to City, together with his preparations, and instructions, as  
to that solemne service, came up. we conceive, to the very same  
thing, of making the people enter *Covenant* with their God.

"King *Josiah* stood in his place, and made a Covenant before  
"the Josiahs Cove-  
nant.  
2 Chr. 34. 31.  
32.

the Lord to walk after the Lord, and to keep His Commandments with all his heart, and with all his soule to performe the words of the Covenant: And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem, and Benjamin to stand to it. And the Inhabitants of Jerusalem did, according to the Covenant of God, the God of their Fathers.

Ez 10. 1, 2, 3. "When Ezra had confessed; weeping and casting himselfe down before the house of God, there assembled unto him our of Israel a very great Congregation, of men and women, and children: for the people wept sore. And Shechaniah answered and said unto Ezra, we have trespassed against our God; yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a Covenant with our God.

Isa. 2. 1, 2, 3. "It shall come to passe in the last dayes, That the Mountaine of the Lords House shall be established in the top of the Mountaines, and it shall be exalted above the Hills [that is, the spirituall Glory and Grace of Christs Kingdome, shall be advanced above all worldly state and power] and many people shall say Come ye, and let us goe-up to the Mountaine of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob [that is, They shall embrace the wayes of Christ readily, freely, and willingly, yea rejoycingly.

Isa. 44. 5. "One shall say I am the Lords and another call himselfe by the Name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD, and surname himselfe by the name of Israel.

Isa. 60. "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightnes of thy Rising —

Jer. 50. 4, 5. "The Children of Israel shall come, they and the Children of Judab together, going and weeping, they shall goe and seek the LORD their God. They shall aske the way to Zion with their faces thetherward, saying, Come and let us joyne our selves to the Lord in a perpetuall Covenant, that shall not be forgotten.

Zec. 8. verses 21, 22, 23. "And the Inhabitants of one City shall goe to another, saying, let us goe speedily to pray before the Lord; and to seek the Lord of Hosts; I will goe also.

Zec. 14. verses 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. "And it shall be, That who so will not come-up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem, to worship the King the LORD of Hosts, even upon them shall be no raine.

We



We humbly conceive these Scriptures speak out fully the practise of the Saints; alone and apart; and altogether when they were of one minde, heart, and judgement in the matters of their God.

We suppose now the Reader that hath called for the *eye-salve*, will not ask for Scriptures out of the New Testament, thence to hold-out the practise of the Saints in those primitive times and ever since; because all those Scriptures cited out of the old Testament referre wholly to the manner of Saints under the New. To whom, prepared now as a Bride adorned for her husband [And a Bride among the Jewes was dressed and decked in all gayity, her own or lent her, so that that day she appeares, a moving Mine of gold and pretious stones as we read] God hath made this Glorious promise; Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himselfe, shall be with them, and be their God, Revel 21. 2, 3. So now we shall forbear to mention the day of small things, as we read in the first Chapter of Johns Gospel; Nor what growth the Church had in Christs time during His personal abode with them, whereof we read. *Act. 1. 15*; Nor how it did encrease presently after, He was taken into Heaven with the encrease of God; nor the manner of their Converse one with another, walking together in Church-Communion, whereof you may read. *Act. 2. 41, 42. 44. 5. 14. 9. 31. 11. 23.* — Nor will we set down here what we read in our Church Chronicles recorded of the servants of Christ in *perilous* or *fierce* times; "They met together every Lords day, where they could, early in the morning, and there after mutual exhortations, and singing of Psalmes, they engaged before God each with other in the strength of Christ to walk in All pleasing, as was comely for Saints. We will conclude, There is a way of Gods worship, wherein He walks or meets with His people, and they with Him, as once it was. And it is a sad signe, That our wayes please not God, when His wayes pleaseth not us. Therefore since His Tabernacle is with men, and they that goe not up to His feast of Tabernacles to worship the King the Lord of Hosts, upon them shall be no name, no blessing, but barrennes and drought shall be upon them. It is time for us to look about us, and to Consider the times, and what we ought to doe. If we will not joyne our selves to the

Joh. 14. 12.

Exod. 25. 22.

30. 36.

2 Cor. 6. 16.



Lord in a perpetuall Covenant, we give too cleare witnes against our selves, that we are *sworne to our Idols*; and little difference betwixt us and the *Anti-Christian-world*, whose judgement now of a long time singeth not, and their damnation slumbreth not. For the Righteous Lord will certainly make His *treas* good to th' utmost upon them shall be no raine, expounded by *Isaiab Chap. 60. 12.* The kingdoms and the nations which will not serve the Church shall perishe: yea these nations shall be utterly wasted. We proceed.

Q: V.I. May not the wicked vow themselves the servants of Christ, and engage themselves the *LORDS* people?

Ans: No, by no means; their engagement will not be taken; they are not free, they are engaged already, and *tantum non* sworne servants to other Lords, being ready servants and willing slaves to *sin* and *Satan*; These are their great Lords and Masters, Satan himselfe their Lord and their God ruling in cheife in their hearts and lives; to whom they have engaged their best service, according to the utmost of their power and skill they have and are still receiving from him. So that suppose now they should engage to God, which yet they can no more doe, than can their God, and Prince of the world, but against Him: but suppose it so for teaching sake, Their Father the *Devill*, whose lusts they will doe, would heare it, and could not hold his peace, but would disallow  
 John 8. 44. his childrens vows in the day, that he heareth them, saying; Not  
 Num. 30. 4. 5. any o' their vows or of their bands, wherewith they have bound their  
 a Mark 5. 18. soules shall stand. Most certainly so it would be; for as that pos-  
 20. sessed man a (though a good man, and designed for high work,  
 b Math. 8. 28. to speak-forth the high praises of his God) was so exceeding  
 c Mark. 5. 3. fierce b, that no man might passe by that way: and so mighty in the  
 Luk. 11. 21. Devills Might, that no man could bind him, no net. with chaines c;  
 so is it with his children, his sons and daughters too (for he keepeth  
 their *Pallace*) If an Almighty Hand holds them not in, they  
 will plucke asunder the chaines, and break in pieces the fetters,  
 as burnt flax, neither can any man tame or hold them.

The short of the matter is this, and the very conclusion of experience; They must be free indeed a, who indeed engage to walk  
 a John 8. 36. as is comely for the *Lords* freemen b; They must be living in *Jeru-*  
 b 1 Cor. 7. 22. salem c, and free of that *Moshe-City* d, who will vow themselves  
 c Isa. 4. 3. the servants of the living God, and live as a people, that have en-  
 d Gal. 4. 26. gaged.

gaged themselves to the work, and service of their God. They must be well agreed that walk together. Friends of God who walk with God; as they are friends of the world, that walke with the world, according to the Course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the aire, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. In a word, They must be strengthened with All-might, who walk up to their engagement to All-pleasing. Eph. 2. 2.

Here we would take in that we have heard spoken for a wicked mans engaging to God; and Covenanting with Him. Col. 1. 10, 11.

"They have entred into Covenant willingly; or if that could not be, unless to engage with their tongues onely, yet they were forced into it, and made to stand to it: for it must be granted that some, if not the most of them, in Asa's time, were wicked, yet all engaged. To this we say; a 2 Ch 15. 17. b 2 Ch 34. 32

That King Asa and Jehojada; King Hezekiah and Josiah engaging the people to seek the Lord, and to be the LORDS people; to enter Covenant with Him, and to stand to it, did in so doing altogether right. And yet if our Rulers should doe so with us, they would doe altogether wrong. The Reasons, as we conceive, are these; Israel was Gods first borne, as He sayes of them; *An Holy people unto the Lord*, the whole Nation was; They were a people SOUGHT out, and had engaged themselves to seek the Lord; they had avouched themselves the Lords people, truely we cannot readily tell how often. But hence we conclude, Those excellent Kings and Priest did their duty, in binding the people fast with their own Cords, laying them straighter and closer upon them, which they did weare too loose. Now for us, we meane the people of this Land, It is not said any where, That we are an *Holy people to the Lord*; Nor have we as Israel did, avouched the Lord for our God, nor sworne to seek Him; at least if so we did doe, it was not in obedience to Gods Command, nor, for the generality of us, knew we what we did. And to goe about to force us to it, otherwise at the best, but with our tongues, as formerly we might doe, were as hard a taske, yea as impossible, as to force the Prince of the Aire, or Spirits of the world to doe it, that is, to engage to God, and Covenant with Him, who in all things stand so cross and contrary to Him. Indeed something we have heard was don at our Baptism, where the fathers and grandfathers stood ( that

Deut. 7. 6.  
Levit. 20. 26.

word some will use, and accordingly will practise ) minding no more ( the most of them ) and understanding as little what the Minister did there, or they themselves engaged to, than did the little thing was brought thither in the Armes.

We are wholly indisposed to speak more to this. So much may assure us, That they, who have made a *Covenant with sin, death, and Hell, and with these are*, in conceit, at an agreement, cannot possibly enter Covenant with God. The first Covenant must be *disannulled*, disclaimed first, yea abominated, & abhorred; And then they may have thoughts of entring Covenant with God. Which thing the Lords people have don, through Him, who shewed them abundant mercy, together with the *iniquity* of their first Covenant; and strengthned them to breake that; and to keep this. Yea He still strengthneth them to stand to their engagement, and to keep their vow, vowing themselves the *LORDS* people. We proceed.

Q: VII. Who is sufficient for this engaging work, to walk with God as aforesaid?

Mich. 6. 8. *Ans:* They and onely they who can *humble themselves to walke with their God*; Can think themselves to *Nothing*; and doe know, that *His Grace shall be sufficient for them*, so as they shall be sure in their visible straights of invisible succours. Therefore these are still craving this grace, as an hungry-man ( for they feelee the want of it, for all uses and imployments, as he of his bread, and thence the spring of desire ) cryeth for an Almes, or as the chape earth ( where so many clefts there are as so many tongues calling to the clouds for raine ) opens its mouth for the showers of heaven. So *Grace* must be sought for, and is by them who know what it is, and desire nothing much, but the Fountaine and *Head-spring* thereof, whom they cannot desire too much.

Phil. 4. 13. *Through Him they can doe All things*, continually strengthening them; *without Him they can doe nothing*; No, great thing, no, nor the smallest thing; not the least good motion heaven-ward; not *any thing* that is good: *their sufficiency* is of God, to Him they look.

Joh. 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

Q: VIII. How must this engagement be entred upon?

*Ans:* There must be serious thoughts, engaging our Consideration, and deliberation about it, before determination or resolution

solution one way or other passe upon it. It must be taken as an  
*oath* must ( for it is, if not the very same, yet is it as weighty eve-  
 ry whit and momentous, nay it is a *swearing to God*, and must be  
 taken ) In *Truth*, in *Judgement*, and in *righteousnesse*; and in *His* Jer. 4. 2.  
*strength* alone All-sufficient for them as to the performance of it,  
 in whom they *blesse themselves, and doe glory*. This is the very  
 hinge of all, the ground and foundation where-on all beareth,  
 That this *vow* or *Engagement*, call it as you please, be undertaken  
 in the *strength of Christ*. It commands all oblation, which So-  
 lomon saith, *Say not thou before the Angel* [ before Christ the An-  
 gel of the Covenant ] *It was an error* [ It was my ignorance  
 what this *engagement* was, as to the matter or substance of it,  
 meanes or manner of performing it, that I entred into it ] where-  
 fore *should God be angry at thy voyce, and destroy the work of thy*  
*hands?* [ as if He had said, that will not excuse thy rashnesse in  
 suffering thy heart to be hasty to utter a thing before God : But  
 rather such an excuse will anger the Lord, and provoke Him to  
 accurse thee in whatsoever thou takest in hand ] Therefore the  
 people of God will put it upon their thoughts, and rouse it about  
 there, what they *engage* upon; what their aimes and ends are in  
 their undertaking; and in *whose strength* they can performe. For  
 they that have engaged for their own ends, and in their own  
 strength, or not wholly in the *strength of Christ*, have *turned back*  
 in the *hoare of temptation*; they have *deale decentfully, turning aside*  
*like a deceitfull or warping bow*; they have growen worle after  
 their engaging, giving cleare evidence against themselves, That  
 they took *no pleasure* in God, and His matters, nor He in such  
*foolles*. And may it not be feared, at least it may be Cautioned,  
 That some, we hope good in the maine, have put more upon their  
*engagement*, than upon Christ Himself. As some may think it e-  
 nough to walke in fellowship with Gods people, though never  
 so unlike them in their walk: we meane, there may be some,  
 who put their engagement in the roome of Christ, as if that  
 could help them alone, or else they have made their engage-  
 ment alone without their reliance upon the power of Christ.  
 That Rule of th' Apostle, which obtaines in all Cases of Duty,  
 doth most in this, *whatsoever ye doe in word or deed, doe all in the*  
*Name of the Lord Jesus*, Col. 3. 17. That is, feele the need ye have  
 of

Ecclef. 5. 6.

a Ecclef. 5. 4.

of Christ in it; and look not that God should accept of you or your engagement, or of what else you doe, but onely through Him, in *whose NAME* you have don it.

Eph. 2 18.  
3. 12.  
The *Name of Christ* is the very *essence* of all the Church doth, of all her *prayers*, all her *praises* [ which are upon the matter, but so many engagements of the eye, eare, tongue, hand, and heart unto and for God ] so that to pray, to praise, to engage in the Name of Christ is (1.) To look up to Christ with the eye of faith, and to fix upon Him, who hath purchased this glorious privilege, and blessed liberty *through Him to have access by one Spirit unto the Father*, there to *speake all our mind*, which is ever accompanied with prailing of Him, and engaging to Him, and is always don in the Name of Christ, that is (2) in the strength of "Christ; And (3) in the virtue of the present *mediation* of Christ which carries this acknowledgement in it, That what we aske on earth, as to the living-up to our engagement, Christ obtaines in heaven for us.

Q: IX. If this engaging to God, that is, as ye expound it, The *vowing back* that mercy againe to God, we have asked of Him in prayer, and received from Him; by a conscionable improvement of the same to the Glory of the Giver, which we think you called, *paying our vows*: If this *engaging to God* (we were saying) be commanded us of God, as *prayer* and *praises* are, directly commanded us in the Word; then our doubt is, and thereupon our question, Whether we may *vow* or *engage* to the doing of that which is directly commanded or forbidden in the Law of God?

Ans: We would speak to this first very briefly and in a word; and then more largely after-wards. This first. That as we conceive, we are not to *vow* to God, That we will *pray to Him as long as we live*, and *praise Him as long*, because He hath heard, and we are assured He will heare us; we are not to *vow* all this, because it is directly charged upon us in His Word. And yet we did not pray unto Him, nor did we praise Him, unless we did engage (1.) To stir up our selves in prayer, and to *watch thereunto* which is to *pray in prayer*, we translate earnestly, or, *praying in the Holy Ghost*; And (2.) If we did not engage to God to use all possible care and diligence, that what we through Christ gained in prayer from God, we would returne by *praise* unto Him, in a blessed improve-

provement of all for Him, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So now we come more directly to Answer the Question; wherein we will be a little larger, than we may be plainer.

The Question is; whether we may *vow* or *engage* to do that which is directly commanded or forbidden in the Law of God? Whereto we Answer, as we are taught, *No*; We must not *vow* the doing of th<sup>e</sup> one or not to doe th<sup>e</sup> other; as for example, we must not *vow* absolutely, *we will not worship Idols*; That we will not *swear*; That we will keep the *Sabbath*, observe the *Lord's day*; That we will honour our parents; That we will doe no murder; for all these Duties are expressly commanded by God; and therefore are past being vowed by us; onely thus we, (observing the Treachery of our hearts) may *vow* and *engage* to a greater care and stricter watch over our selves either for the doing of th<sup>e</sup> one, or not to doe th<sup>e</sup> other. In a word, we may and must, *vow* more care and diligence in and about all those things, required of those that have subscribed their names to the God of *Israel*.

And thus we are to understand that of *Jacob*, Gen 28. 21. *vowing that the LORD should be his God*. Also That of *David*, Psal. 119. 106. *Jacob* had avowed or avouched the Lord for his God before; but then he did it with more intensiveness of spirit than before. So likewise, *David* had kept the words of his God before, but now he would be more strict than before in keeping of them. So then, the conclusion of the whole matter is this; when we *vow* (or *engage* to) things already commanded or forbidden, we must pitch and place our *vow* not upon the *manner* of the Commandement, but upon the *manner*, and intensiveness of our spirit in keeping it.

See Job 22.  
ver. 27. Mr.  
C. exp: there:  
p. 271.

Q. X. Whence is it then that we heare this Covenanting one with another; as much almost contradicted by some good men (as is meet for us to judge) as it is blasphemed by the *Wicked*?

Ans: Truly it seemes a *Mystery* unto us, and that every and adversary of all Righteousness, hath his hand in it, as we said. That good men should contradict it. Indeed, That wicked men should blaspheme it, that is no *Mystery*; for, in the *work* of the *flsh* are; it is manifest. We desire humbly to give in our perswasion here, though we are the poorest of the flock, and the simplest among;



among many, if we may be numbred amongst them; our knowledge is very small, the Lord knows, and hath made us to know it, to what it might have been, had we well husbanded our time and parts, and means. But He knows also, That we, through the imply of the Spirit, are increasing therein, giving *all diligence* that way; and we trust it may be said of us, *We have an unbelief from the Holy one, and we know all things*, chiefly needfull for us to know; we know Jesus Christ savingly, and we know that we know Him, keeping His Commandments (in desire and endeavour), as we keep the *spark of our eye, our ornaments or jewels*; or as a weary traveller *finds his way*: we desire and endeavour with all diligence also, to know Him more, and to grow in that knowledge; and then we may be said truly and indeed to know all things; for He is All; All in all persons; All in all things. We will make bold therefore to speak farther to this, and to tell our persuasion, and judgement in this matter; and then the Reasons why we are so perswaded, and doe so judge; first then our persuasion is, That the close of the Answer given to the *ninth Question* is abundantly sufficient to cure the synnewes of all that much, which alwayes hath been or now is, and still will be argued against this engaging ourselves, and our best services for our Deare Lord and Christ, and against all that which is contrary to Him; and to enter into Covenant each with other, and all with Him in the power of His Might to stand so. What more reasonable than is this? To vow (and engage to) a greater care and stricter watch over our selves; and more care and diligence in and about all those things required of all them that have subscribed their Names to Him. What more agreeing to the mind of Christ express in His Scriptures, than to vow more *intensiveness* of spirit in keeping to Him, and serving of Him? Surely we may vow in His Name (as before expounded) to give all diligence, that we may be fervent in spirit serving the Lord. If as we humbly conceive, we ought make our prayer to Him, or praise of Him, if we doe not at the same time engage our hearts unto him about the same thing. And then, supposing that praying, and praising is an implicit kind of engaging our hearts to Him, whom we praise and pray unto, we conclude That what is our duty to doe every one alone and apart, is comely and decent to be done by us altogether, walking in fellowship according



ing to Gospel-order. We would adde a little more in prosecution of this matter, & so give our reasons of our perswasion therein: and First, We may and ought, engage to stand to that Covenant made to us in Christ, comprehensively *ALL* the *Saints* salvation, and *ALL* their desire, because they have judged themselves meet to receive the *seales* thereof, having received first the *witnesse of the Spirit*, bearing *witnesse with their spirit*, that they are the *children of God*, Rom. 8. 16.

Secondly, We may and ought engage to live-up to that *Name* is called upon us, of whom the whole *Family* of heaven and earth is named. This surely will be granted on all hands, That we may engage to hold-out the *Name* we are called by; which is but to engage in the strength of Christ, to be *Holy as He is Holy*; To depart from iniquity; To touch no unclean thing; for we name the *Name of Christ*, and which is more, if more can be, we have His *Name* called upon us, and put within us. They that are true members of That Body may be called, as we think the whole *Body* is, *CHRIST*, The *Anointed of God with the Holy Ghost and with power*, as the Lord Himselfe was, but in our *Measure*. Now if this be so, and we are, as we professe to be, and are Named. Then we may engage sure to a greater care and stricter watch over our selves, as was said, we may vow more intensivenesse of spirit, to live-up to our *Name*, to make *full prooffe* thereof; as he that was a true Minister; so we; that are true Christians. *Live-up to thy Name*, saith *Hierom* to those he wrot unto, that had very significant and teaching Names. Now no Name is so significant as this, or so teaching. Which remembers us of that, we have heard said of *Tertullian*, "If I perceived, said he; the Man were not holy, not so much as a shew of *Holiness* appears in him, or no more than a shew, by his works he denies it; of any name in the world "I would not name him a Christian; That excellent Name would worse become him, as a Jewell in a swines snout; for *Holiness* is of the very essence of *Christianity*. A Christian without holiness, is a Christian without Christ. It is *Contradictio in ad pecto*, an Holy-man without Holiness; a gracious man without grace, as salt without savour; a vine without fruit in the season thereof.

We have told our perswasion and Reasons thereof, from the seales of the Covenant; and our Christian Name. We will for a

E

close

Eph. 3. 15.

2 Tim. 2. 19.

1 Cor. 13. 12.  
A& 10. 38.

Nemo Christianus nisi qui placet tantum Christianus uult; enim Christianus malus est. Tert. Af. Cap. 43.

No bad man in the world, and a true Christian.

close of this give in here Holy *Bucers* lamentation, as we read it Englished unto us by Mr. *Palmer*, whom His God hath made one of the *excellent of the earth*. " Oh that we had renewed and established the Covenant of eternall life, as we have done a Civill Covenant. The Churches of the Martyrs were joyned together by the severe Religion of Discipline. I miserably feare what may become of our Churches, unless they are more closely graffed into Christ, and that they restore Discipline among themselves. There are some of all orders, who are against the restoring of solid fellow-ship and Discipline. These are holy *Bucers* words, which that worthy man Englished as he saith; " That we, the weakest above many, and other like, as we are may observe the concurring judgements of holy men, as to this practise of engaging our hearts to God; and Covenanting each with other in the strength of Christ to keep them up so engaged, that when a temptation comes to take away the heart from Christ ( and then the eye, eare, tongue and hand, and ail are gone, when the heart is gon ) we may say and say truly, every one for himselfe, *my heart is engaged to Him*, who asked it of me; and He hath it, and, according to my earnest desire, will keep it, engaged to Him, And all I have engaged for Him; for *who made me to differ*, or *what have I which I have not received from Him*? And Now we cannot forbear, the love of Christ constraining, who loves a people walking with Him should engage unto Him, we cannot forbear to set downe Mr. *Palmer*s own words, which being so full-up to the will of Christ, and mind of His people, shall end this matter.

Jer. 30. 21.

" Now as that, which is stil'd a Church *Covenant*, so much debated among the Godly, we take it to be no more, than such a mutual agreement and joyning together mentioned, that solid fellowship and discipline may be set up, else how can there be an unity and fellow-membership in a particular Church? blaw 111

" Say such even who dispute against this practise, *This is imply'd in the very principles of Christianity*. We then apprehend, it is not unlawfully but indeed necessary, expressly to profess what flowes from the principles of it; specially in this Case, where it is a mans own free act, that constitutes him a member of a particular Church. Such a profession and expresse consent to walk in fellowship, and to submit to Discipline, we call for.

" And

"And we beleewe without it, it will hardly be set-up unlesse a  
 "Catechistcall Answer or two of a person examin'd ( though ne-  
 "ver so dead-hearted, and a close enemy to the power of Godli-  
 "nesse ) shall be thought enough, which will to settle againe  
 "where we were, in old ignorance, luke-warmnesse, loosnesse and  
 "formality ; In stead of such as *feare the Lord, walking in fellow-  
 "ship with the Father, and one with another in the Spirit.* We pro-  
 ceed in his words.

"Now that any, that truly feare the Lord should stick at this,  
 "viz. to professe to own the Covenant of Gods free grace ; to  
 "give-up themselves unto it, and to Jesus Christ the Mediatour  
 "of it in all His Offices ; To walk under His Discipline, and in  
 "fellowship with His people ; We cannot but justly wonder, and  
 "why any godly men of parts should frame and raile up *bug-  
 "beares* against it. *The Lord give them to tast the goodness & sweet-  
 "nesse of it, and they will be humbled before the Lord, that they ever  
 "mishood it.* There is a little more ; we can spare none of it.  
 "To the Novelty of this practise as it is objected to us and others  
 "we could answer at large here, That it is as old as the Gospel,  
 "for beleevors to walk together, in fellowship in the duties ex-  
 pressed : We will adde no more here ; but beg the God of all  
 Grace, That He would give us His Grace and make it sufficient  
 for us, that we may practise according to that we have read.

And now having promised these things, for the clearing our  
 way and undertaking before us ; And Commending all this he-  
 therto spoken to each others hearing, we proceed to hold forth  
 the matter and manner of our engagement ; what that is where-  
 unto, in the strength of Christ, we doe engage, but this after we  
 have shewen what did draw us, thereunto ; And to this, we con-  
 ceive, we are in the first place to speak fully and clearly, as is re-  
 quisite for us to doe, in so solemne, and great a matter.

Exhortation. **The**

The engagement of certaine Brethren, walking under the Band of a Church-Covenant in Gospel-Communion one with another.

After they had made an humble and hearty acknowledgement of what they had received from their God, and are, by the supply of the Spirit, still receiving from Him, for their enabling to keep close unto Him.



a Hof. 11. 3.

b Col. 3. 11.

c Phil. 4. 13.

d 1 Sam. 14. 29

a Luk 2. 32.

b 2 Co 12. 11.

c Psa. 119. 59.

d Deu. 4. 19.

a Act. 14. 16.

b Rom. 8. 13.

c Pet. 2. 10.

a Jer. 31. 19.

Ezec. 6. 9

20 43.

d Hof. 7. 13.

Zech. 14. 5

Eph 1. 19.

Grn. 19. 16.

W<sup>H</sup>ose Names are under-written, having through Him, to whom we lifted up our soules; each of us, alone and apart and altogether, beseeching Him to take us by the Armes, and teach us how to goe; Who is *All in all* b; All in all persons; All in all things, and continually strengtheneth c; therefore He being the strength of Israel d, and the Glory of Israel a, must have the glory of His own strength in us & with us, who are Nothing b: having through Him, we were saying,

*I thought on our wayes c* that is, thoroughly considered them, what those wayes were, and whether they did lead, yea drive us d, being our own a, after the flesh, wayes of sin and death. And the same good Spirit, That gave us a sight of our wayes, giving us to loath c them also; and so to leave them (for we cannot truly leave that we doe not truly loath) turned our feet from out of those wayes, towards Himself, which before time were running from Him with our backs upon Him, as the wildest and most impetuous streame run's from the fountaine head; Indeed we fled from Him (that is our naturall flight, and so He complains a, they have fled from Me) like as they fled from before the earth-quake. But He, the Al-mighty God laid His Hand upon us, and put forth the exceeding greatness of His power towards us, being so mercifull to us; and Called us out of our Sodom, that horrible pit of Darknes (such it appears to us now) that horrid

rid state of Nature, or of Death, into His *marvellous light* a; therefore it is called *light* and *Glory* together b.

II. Having received for our deare Lord, and Saviours sake this first Grace this *speciall favour* ( so we call it being the same He sheweth to His peculiar people ) we are incited and stirred-up ( hence we conclude the Truth of our Grace ) to *cry* for more grace, more and more of the *Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him* ( for we, that have received this Grace can discern in our selves the want of Grace which they cannot possibly doe that wholly want it ) that we may *grow-up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ* : For this is to *grow in Grace* ; increasing therein *with the increase of God, to grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*. A gracious man never sayes he has enough Grace, till Grace be consummate in *Glorie*. Also.

III. Having this knowledge of Him, and growing therein, whereby He *justifies many*, even all them, and none but them, that have this *saving, justifying, experimental, fiduciall knowledge of Him*, ( for a Notionall, or speculative knowledge, a bare work of the understanding, swimming in the braine, having some light as the Moone hath, but no heat, and *purifies not*, no more than a notionall or *dead hope* doth, causing but a wind there, which *puffeth up*, no nourishment, and so is, nothing, or a thing of nought worth, nothing ) but having we were saying, this knowledge of Him, we are *purifying our selves, even as He is pure*. We have also, through the same Grace, a fuller and clearer knowledge of our selves, what *curled creatures we were*, as all now are, while they ate, as we were, *with our Him*. Therefore *flesh, the wisdom, goodnesse, and excellencie thereof* ( the corruption and filthiness thereof is *not to be named* without indignation, *as becometh Saints* ) though it would be *ruined* for so the *Bramble* would, yet *no confidence must be put therein*. And we beseech Him daily, and hope in His mercy we shall hold on seeking, That He would *anoint our eyes with eye-salve*, that we may have a fuller sight of Him, that we may, the more *love and admire Him*, and a clearer insight into our selves, that we may more *abhorre our selves*, ( then we shall put no confidence in our selves ) *depraving our flesh and senses*. Also.

IV. Having

Act 20. 28.

1 Tim 4. 16.

1 Tim. 3. 4.

Joh 1. 24. 387.

first impressio.

Joh. 3. 19.

1 Tim. 5. 8.

Math. 5. 15.

IV. Having received this *heavenly wisdom and power from above*, to take heed unto our selves; and to rule well our own house, having our children in subjection with all gravity, we are in a good posture of spirit, through the supply thereof. ( in our station, and according to our measure and gift received ) to take care of the *Church of God*; For, as we have learnt, " the same wisdom and " justice, and holiness, for kind, onely more enlarged and exten- " sive acts in eyther (sphere, and, will regularly move in the lit- " tle and the greater house. But we have experienced the Apo- stles Conclusion; *He, that knowes not how to rule his owne house, cannot take care of the house of God.* If we be darksome within doores, we cannot be lightsome without; for, though our light- side may be outward, yet it is dark as darknes it selfe, the more dark because we make a meere shew of light, which is not in us, but hated by us. The Truth is, If we are, as *unfavoury salts* with- in doores, we are the same without, and *worse than Infidels* in both places, for not providing things most necessary for our own, we cannot doe it for others. If we are in our own house, as a *candle put under a bushel*, so as we give no light to those, that are in our house with us, we cannot then shine before others, as the candle does put on a *Candlestick*, that they may see our good works, and glorifie our Father, which is in heaven. But blessed be the God of all Grace, who hath given us more Gract, and instructed us to more discretion in this matter, so as we can, according to the Grace re- ceived, *rule our owne house, To whom be honour and power everlast- ing. Amen.*

V. Having this in the purpose of our hearts to beg of Him [ who put good motions, purposes and resolutions into our hearts, where there was not so much as a good thought before; no, but a *resisting* thereof, of any thing, every thing that was good; there- fore this putting into the heart, is a *miraculous Creation*, as that was, the *speaking light out of Darknesse*; and more wonderfull; for that darknes made no resistance, but our darknesse do's, so great was our darknes ] we were saying, having this in the purpose of our hearts to beg of Him, *we hope that in the purpose of our hearts*, He hath so graciously, and so wonderfully put there ( for the present preparation of the heart of God, and this must be still begged of God to continue prepared hearts in a gracious frame ), and ha-

ving

1 Chro. 29. 18.



ving perswaded with us to beg this thing; and kept it in our hearts, hitherto, and we are perswaded, will so doe to the end, we give all diligence to worke out our salvation with feare and trembling, (which affections or passions rather are two great meanes "appointed of God to deliver us from two the greatest plagues, "security of the flesh; and pride of spirit) so making our calling and election sure, that so an entræe may be ministred unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdome of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ. Also, and

VI. Lastly, Having followed us with His eye upon us, and dealt so well with us, as to enable us to follow-on to know Him more, we apply our selves in His feare, and power of His might, to all those meanes He hath appointed for the encrease of Grace, diligently attending them in publick and in private at home and abroad, hearing the Word preached in season and out of season, (for the charge is full of Dread to the people as well as to Ministers) Reading the Holy Scriptures, giving attendance to exhortation, to Doctrine (for we think that Counsell given to Timothy is for our learning also) Meditate upon these things, give thy selfe wholly to them, that thy profiting may appeare to all. He that would be a good preacher, said *Musculus*, must be very conversant in the Scriptures: so also must he be, that would be a good Christian. He cannot be an approved Teacher of others, nor can he approve himselfe taught, that is not conversant in and studies much that sacred Book. Whence it may be so charitably judged of us, That we abominate their way and their doings, as the Devill or Hell it selfe; who speak evill of that, they have not learning we meane; and of those they know not, and so would if they could, as others before them, of the same persuasion with them, *Cecidere presbiteros & presbiterium*, destroy the Ministers and Ministry both.

We are Conversant also as our time and occasions can give leave [for our Callings must be attended, with all care and diligence, else we should walk as *unruly ones*, like disorderly Soldiers out of rank; Nay we should else (not providing for our own house, which we cannot doe, not attending our Callings as we ought to doe,) be worse not only than an *infidel*, because the light of nature teacheth him to provide for his house, but we should be worse

a 1 Cor. 1. 8.

1 Thes. 5. 23.

24.

Heb. 3. 6. 14.

6. 11. 12.

b Phil. 2. 12.

See Zinbi

p. 131.

2 Pet. 1. 10, 11

a Psal 32. 8.

34. 15.

b Jer. 40. 4.

2 Tim. 4. 1, 2.

1 Tim. 4. 13.

14.

*Qui fieri velis*

*bonum, Concio-*

*nator dei opera*

*ut sit bonus*

*Biblicus.*

Met: Ad:

a 1 Thes. 5. 14.

The 3. to, 14

Every man

must have a

lawfull Cal-

ling, Gen. 47. 3

and must ac-

tend it with



all Diligence, worse than *Beasts*, the fowles of the Aire, and creeping things of the earth, for these provide for their own, the light of Nature teaching them; we should also, shewing the least neglect there, wrong our selves, and prove snares to others, before whom we stand charged to walk in *wisdom*, that *without the word* they may be won by *our good Conversation* ] we were saying, as our Callings, our attendance thereupon will give us leave, we are conversant in other books, specially those, that may most concerne us, walking together in a Brotherhood, and decently in our families with a perfect heart, wisely in a perfect way; As that full and excellent Confession of Faith, held out to us by the Assembly of Divines; with their larger and short Catechisms, Also, relating to our dayly practise, that excellent Book, that *magnum in minimis*, that much in a little; that greatest book in the smallest volumn; Dr Owens *ESCHOL*. We take speciall notice also of that fourth Epistle to the Christian Reader set before the Treatises.

Having now, in the integrity of our hearts, and innocency of our hands, premised all this for the reasons before said: And desiring dayly and earnestly, That all this may be much in our thoughts, and held out in our lives.

I. We doe in the sight of God and Father; In the Name of His Son; and Continuall supply of the Holy Spirit, engage our selves, all we are, all we have, all we can unto Him, in whom we are by a most speciall *in-Being* ( and not as the whole Creation is in Him, and He in it, by a generall *in-being*, by the right of a Creator upholding all things by the word of His power, Heb. 1. 3. without which they could not but be annihilated, and resolved into their first Nothing ) by a most speciall *In-Being*; we said, and from whom all our fruit is; and for whom as all was laid in, and laid up, so must it be laid out; All for Him alone, as sure as He is our only Beloved; and we His. And

We doe ( 2d ) engage in the strength of All Might to walk worthy of the Lord, in All pleasing; as becometh a people of His choise and care & love, that are called by His Name, and wrought for the selfe same thing, being planted in Him, bearing upon Him; made one with Him, and conformable to Him; and are still in the conformance use and improvement of all His Appointments, maintaining fellowship with Him, by prayer specially; the beaten way

way of the soules Communion with God, saith one; It is a conference with God, a Company-keeping with Him, saith another. Also

II. We doe through Him, who makes us have dominion over the Mighty [ Enemies and Adversaries within and without we know not well, which are the greatest, more deadly, *flesh and blood*, or *principalities and powers*; We think, and so we speak, as those that have tasted our own thoughts, That the *flesh*, though so far from terrible-ness, that it is all pleasing-ness, is the most dangerous and deadly enemy; for were it not for *flesh in us*, *principalities and powers* could doe us no hurt. A tryed Truth it is, that children of *Anak* are in this way terrible enemies, Angels of Darknesse, and sometimes turning themselves into Angels of light, standing as with their swords drawn, to keep from entering into that *Narrow way*; or, being entred, to walk with a *right foot in it*; according to the Truth of the Gospel, so holding up to the Covenant of their God; or if none of all this, they can effect he by his own, his children by their Fathers *wiles, methods, and devises*, then they will cast a *spewing upon the way* ] therefore we said, through Him, who maketh us *more than Conquerours* over these mighty enemies, in whose strength we *wrestle*, and by whose *blood* we *overcome*, doe engage our selves each to other as *members one of another* in the same Body, whereof our Lord and Christ is the Head and the Saviour.

First, To take speciall care, as of the whole Church of Christ, the Mother, and her Daughters, or sister-Churches, so far as their state and Condition can be represented to our thoughts by our eye or eare, or other wayes. And of the *Word of Truth* which, with the Spirit, begetteth children to Her. That the *everlasting Gospel* may spread it selfe, *through the midst of Heaven*, as the morning upon the Mountains: so also ( we engage ) as

Secondly, To take care one of another, as *fellow-helpers of the Truth*, so also *fellow-helpers one of another*, as *fellow-members* use to doe. And in saying so much, and doing thereafter, we have said and don all for this *Naturall* caring for one the other, as the member careth for its fellow-member, *naturallly*, sincerely, heartily, comprehends the whole duty required of us one towards another. It is a walking full up in desire and endeavour, to those prescriptions set before us in Gods Word summarily, according to

Eph. 1. 27.  
Mr R. Nol.  
p. 55.  
Jud. 5.

Eph. 6. 12.  
Revel. 12. 11.

2<sup>nd</sup> miss.  
Phil. 1. 20.

Gal. 5. 16.

this rule ( which obtaines in all Cases of Duty to the Church abroad, to our enemies with-out, ( for they with us are members of the *politick* Body ) and to our Brethren within ) whereafter all True Gospellers alwayes have, still doe, and still shall waike, by the good hand of God with them, walking *uprightly according to the Truth of the Gospel*, upon whom is peace and mercy, as upon the whole *Israell of God*, yet

Because this feeling expression, *Members one of another*, contains much, yea all; that can be laid in this matter, we would insist a little more upon it.

This being a *member of another*, and dealing with him, and forth unto him as a member doth to his fellow-members, is to have the same *soul with another*, like minded indeed, as naturally to care for my Brethren and to deale forth to them as one member deales with th' other, very studiously readily and *carefully* as to himselfe, so to the Church of Christ, so to every particular member there, and *wellfare* of the whole and every part; he *naturally* careth for it, he serves the *Church* and every *Brother* and *sister* there, as they did, they *took no gaine of money*. Indeed *this work is his wages*; The member of the Naturall body, be it the eye or hand ( these are the *helping members*, ) it is at undantly sufficient, it hath given ease and comfort to its fellow-member; To speak it in a word, If we live-up to the engagement ( as through Christ we may ) to care for each other as *members one of another*, we shall care for the Churches of Christ, & for the promoting The Truths of Christ, that the Gospel *may run and be glorified* also, for each others wellfare; specially that our *soules may prosper*; we shall doe all this as *naturally*, as that good Woman the Mother of *Moses*, took her own child, and *nursed it*; *He giue thee thy wages*, said the *Princes*; No great matter whether you doe or no, thought the Mother, it shall make no difference, she had her deare child in her Armes againe, whom she feared she should never see more, and she had leave to keepe it in her house, and command to nurse it there; that was abundantly *sweet wages* for her *sweet work*;  
 "How gratioously will God dispose of things, if we could leave them to His disposing. He gave His Son to the world in the *"fullnesse of time*, so will He, with Him, every other Mercy. He will surely, if we can trust Him, nay whether we Trust Him, or no, He

1st. 4. 21.  
 Phil. 2. 20.  
 1st. 4. 21.

Jud. 5. 19.

3 John 2.  
 Exod. 2. 9.

He will give such *Nursing, Fathers and nursing Mothers* to His Church, that shall *care for them as naturally*, as the *Nurse* careth for her childe, or as the Mother before-mentioned, *took her child and nursed it*. Also

Thirdly, We engage *as members one of another*, against all that may hurt us; for such is the care and watchfulness, of one member, for and over each other, by making our *watch strong* against the *flesh*, borne with us, bred-up with us, feeding with us at the same Table, lying with us in the same bed; the worst enemy in our bosom, though seemingly our best, as it pretendeth to be, and nearest friend; Therefore against the *flesh* we engage our watchfulness, as against the world and the Devill. And

Fourthly, Not to meddle in matters *too high for us*, or which will engender *strife*, or *doubtfull disputations*; as they use to doe, who will not endure *sound doctrine*; but after their own *lusts*, heap to themselves teachers, having *itching eares*, turned from the *Truth*, and unto *Fables*. But we engage in the strength of Christ to *watch in all things*. And so

Fifthly, To *save our selves from this untoward, froward, perverse and crooked generation*, not by leaving our places; or leaving undon any one of those services, we, in duty, are bound to performe to those, that are *with out*. But by keeping our garments *pure and unspotted* of the world; and girding up our loines (for all care and diligence must be given this way) that we may be kept cleane) from the *impurities, pollutions* or defilements of the world we must abominate, and then we shall fly from their damnable Doctrines, and horrid practises; Those that obey not *sound doctrine*, we are charged, (and then we must engage to it) *to note such men*) and have no company with them. The companion of *fooles shall be destroyed*. There is an elegancy here, which our English cannot reach-to. But this is to our purpose; why must a Companion of *fooles* be destroyed? Because he will be such an one, as vile, base, and abominable, as is he, with whom, upon choice, and with delight, he converseth. If Satan take us among his own, he will reckon us for his own, and quickly make us his own. A sad story might be told here, but dayly experience assureth it. If we will work the thing, that good is, we must depart from the workers of iniquitie; *Depart from mee ye evill doers: for I will keep the*

2 Ti. 4. 3, 4, 5.

Ast. 2. 40.  
Romans.

James 1. 27.

2 Pet. 2. 20.

2 Thes. 3. 14.  
Pro. 13. 20.

*Commandements of my God.* We engage not to keep company with them ; no, not to eat with such an one, upon choice, with delight, no nor bid him God speed ; For he, that biddeth Him God speed, is partaker of his evill deeds.

Sixthly, We engage to live as is comely for sons and daughters ; Followers of God as deare Children, calling Him Father, who, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every mans work ; and so to passe the time of our sojourning here in feare ; That we may be blameless and harmles the Sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, amongst whom, we doe engage, in the strength of God, to shine as lightes ; that, as He, who hath called us, is Holy, so we may be Holy in all manner of conversation ; having no fellowship with the unfruitfull workes of darkness, but by the exactnesse of our walk ( for we should walk even as He walked, 1 Joh. 2. 6. ) and by the Holines of our lives, or Godlinesse of our conversation ; we should ( as well as with our tongues declare against sinners, which is not don but by divine assistance<sup>a</sup>, and so ) condemne<sup>b</sup>, testifie<sup>c</sup> against, and reprove<sup>d</sup> them. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing, we should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men ; having a good Conscience, that whereas they speak evill of us, as of evill doers they may be ashamed, that falsely accuse our good Conversation in Christ. And

In the last place, Because God hath heard our voyce, and inclined His eare, we can say, as He said, who was not more in the wayes of God, than the wayes of God were in Him<sup>a</sup> ; for all whose strength is in the Lord as Davids was, can say as He did, and engage so to say, *We will call upon Him as long as we live*<sup>b</sup>. We will never cease praying, the Command being<sup>c</sup>, ( and the practise was answerable<sup>d</sup> ) *pray without ceasing* ; though the words of prayer cease in the mouth, the Grace of prayer, shall not cease in the heart : For when the voice of His people cannot be heard, the voice of their breathing may. The heart has a tongue, that God can heare ; and the Spirit has a tongue, which none can cut-out : when the man cannot speak, the Spirit may pray : so we are resolved, and doe engage in the strength of Christ, to call upon Him as long as we live, and to praise Him as long as we have any being ; For hetherto, He hath enclined His eare, and heard us, granting to us, what was best for us, if not the same alwayes we asked in kind,

yet.

yet that, which was better, yea best for us ; if not to our *will*, yet to our *weal*. He hath heard our prayers, therefore *we will Call upon Him as long as we live*. And so

We doe engage to one another, to goe to God each for other, entreating Him for His Great Names sake to perfect the work He hath begun — And for His Churches, seeing our meannesse is such, for the most of us, that we cannot Contribute our Counsells, nor purses, nor bodily paines, we will with all the *Israel of God*, engage our prayers, as a combined strength, as sure as we have *set our affections that way*; for no man, how poore soever in outwards, is poore that way, if *rich in faith*, and *poore in spirit*: we were saying, we engage to *pray without ceasing*, to the Hearer of prayers for His Churches, That He would remember them with the *favour*, He beareth towards them; Which He most certainly will doe. But He must be enquired off by the house of Israel *to doe it for them*; To raise-up Zion so gloriously, *That the Gentiles shall come to her light, and Kings to the brightnesse of her Rising*. And that *Babylon* may be cast down like a *Milstone* into the great waters; That the vengeance that is written, may be executed upon that City of Gods Curse, by Armies *chosen, called and faithfull*, whose *aines shall be pure, and ends holy* in shooting all the Arrowes of Gods indignation, against that *bloody City*. and all those her helpers, or well-willers, that cleave unto her in love, making both her and all her lovers, as we read it written, an *abhorring to all flesh*, chiefly because she hath *SINNED AGAINST THE LORD*. As for the evil she hath don to the people of God, those execrable cruelties, she has exercised against them, and terrible wrath, whose *rage went up to heaven*, she hath poured out upon them. All this and much more the people of God leave w<sup>th</sup> their God, to whom *belongeth vengeance, and recompence*, as He hath said, onely they say, as the *Inhabitants of Zion* are allowed to say; *The violence don to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon*. O Lord God to whom *vengeance belongeth*: O God to whom *vengeance, shew thy selfe, shine forth clearly, lift up thy selfe Thou Judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud*; LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked Triumph? No longer, saith the Lord, nor one minute longer. than while These Mine Enemies and Adversaries shall have made themselves meet.

for:

1 Chro. 29. 3.

Ezr. 36. 37.

Isa. 60.

14. 20.

Rev. 17. 14.

19. 14.

Jer. 50. 14.

Deut. 32. 35.

Jer. 51. 35.

Psa. 94. 1, 2, 3.



for that astonishing desolation is prepared for them, *filling up their measures*; and I have made My people meet, for that Glorious salvation, is preparing for them; and for their making them meet for it, *My fire is in Zion, and My furnace in Jerusalem*. So soone as this *refining work* is don (yet the Lord will not refine His people as *silver* is refined, for their dross will never out, as long as *flesh* is with-in, besides He will sit by them while they melt; But so soone as ever this *refining worke* is don, The *salvation* that is written shall come to *Zion*, flying as upon *Eagles wings*; for Her Lord Himselfe shall bring it, *riding upon the Heavens for her Help; and in His excellency on the skie*, (that is,) He will help *speedily*, and He will shew *His state and magnificence* in Helping: And as *speedily*, but terribly shall utter desolation come upon *Babylon*, as it is written, in a moment, in one day, her plagues shall come upon her in their perfection. The Lord hath said it, and He will doe it, *Travelling in the greatnesse of His strength*, when He do's this thing; *He will tread this wine-presse alone; His owne Arme shall bring this salvation; His own fury shall uphold Him; and of all the people there shall be none with Him: none;* (to explaine it in passage) He shall have multitudes with Him, *Armies following Him upon white Horses, called and chosen and faithfull*; And yet He treads this wine-presse alone, and of all the people there was none with Him, none to eclipse the *Glory of His wisdom, power, righteousness, goodnesse, mercy*; All these shall be, with Him. but all their wisdom, is but His wisdom with them; the same may be said, of their power, goodnesse, and help, they brought in that way, all was but His help in them and with them; so that we must find at the foot of the account, *Jehovah God did all*; And the creature how beautifull soever with the beauty his Lord cast upon him, though a *diademe* and as a *Crowne of Glory* in His Lords hand, yet was he *nothing*; nor did he ought else at all in his own strength but sin; for which he must take to himselfe *shame*: for as sin is all the creature doth in his own strength; so shame is all he must assume to himself, giving to Him to whom it doth belong, all the Glory, for He did all. *When the day of vengeance, which is in His heart, and the yeare of His Redemption is come*, It shall appeare to all the world, That He treads the wine-*presse alone*; and of all the people, there was none with Him.

Yet,



Yet, as was said. He will be enquired off by the house of Israel to do this for them. Therefore

We engage in the strength of Christ, and as that shall come in to joyne with those, that cannot keep *silence* at such a time at this. Luk. 12. 44. ex. 17. 11.  
 And Blessed be God, who hath wrought a people for this very thing, and gives them leave to *Command* Him, to wrestle with Him, and prevaile These people are acquainted with their Lords mind; He withholds that, which He is most willing to give; as we to our child, that they may tugge at it, and with strong *wrestlings* mi-  
*ty through Him*, get it from Him; He prolongeth the Deliverance, that they may prolong, and stretch-out their prayers; doe as His deare Son did, and the very same His deare children can doe, in His strength; And being in an *Agonie*, He prayed more earnestly; the longer that was stretched-out, so likewise was his prayer. So are the Churches prayers too, longer now than ordinary, and more *servent*; Dearely bought and long a comming, is marvellous wellcome, when it is come, and sweetest in enjoying. The summe is, and the Conclusion of all; The Churches mercies must be wrastled out of her Fathers hand, her mercies, and every one of her Childrens mercies, they must be won by prayer, and worne by praises; And blessed be God, His deare Children followers of Him, can wrestle with Him, overcome Him, *Command* Him, pre-  
 vaile over Him, in the power of His own might, for which they ascribe to Him all the Glory. Amen.

This is the summe of our engagement, who have found it in our hearts with full purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord; and to begge his Grace continually, That He would keep it in the purpose of our hearts, so to doe, Amen, and Amen.

*An End.*



A Postscript.



Although thus wee have spoken touching a *Church-Covenant* and our engaging one to th' other, in the strength of Christ, to stand thereunto; And as we have beleev'd, so we have spoken, That the *Oath of the Covenant*, as before explained, is as much the Duty of *Saints* by *Calling* to enter-into, as to receive the *seales* thereof is their privilege: Notwithstanding, though we, or the most of us, doe freely and heartily professe our consent to all this; yet we doe not intend it for such a necessary *Test* of our *humbling our selves* to walke with our God, as this cannot be without that; or that he, who cannot enter into it, shall not be admitted to walk with us. We cannot doubt, but that many *walke humbly* with their God, strengthened with *All might* to *All-pleasing*, yet never heard of a *Church-Covenant*, or bestowed thoughts about it. We shall not then obtrude it upon any, if we had power so to doe, for that were to reckon of it of Necessity to salvation, at least to *Church-Communion*; and so, perhaps, we might reflect some blame upon others, more righteous than our selves. We onely said, it is *lawfull* and *needfull*; and truly we cannot conceive how matters can be carried-on, according to right order, without it; Therefore, to some of us, there seemes a *necessitie* thereof, as was said.

But yet, if we shall observe in any the least Breathing; after Christ, a love to Him, a delight in Him, a zeale for Him, and against all is contrary to Him, such an one should be gladly received by us, and welcomed with all acceptation, though he might, modestly, perhaps conscientiously refuse to enter a *Church-Covenant*, for he may scruple at it, whether there be any such

*Consistency among the Churches of Christ.* This rather is the rule we would goe-by; The *Test* we would take; the thing we would have made out with the tongue, and evidenced by the life. That there is *Holiness* at the Heart; *sincerity* at the bottom. And if this be made appeare, (as Holinesse with-in, will appeare with out) we aske no more for Conscience-sake, but with such an one would we walk, and would make no doubt, but he or she would be an honour to us, and an help also. And for th' other matter, it may abide leysure for farther Consideration. We would look after that in others, and no more, than what our gracious God and tenderest Father looks after in us; *TRUTH* now, in the *Covenant of Grace*, not *Measure*; though that should be according to that we have received; for he that soweth liberally, looks to reap plentifully; let us then, in the strength of Christ, *goe on unto perfection*, such as is required of us, and accepted from us under the Grace of the Gospel; *If by any meanes we may attaine unto the Resurrection of the Dead; growing in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: To Him be Glory, both now and for ever. Amen.*

This onely we would add (which should have been inserted pag. 2. line 15.) That we may call to remembrance, not onely what the Churches of Christ may now doe, as to a Church Covenant, their entring thereinto; But what they, with the whole nation, have don, *when loe, we gave our hands*, lifting them up to the *Most High God*, and did *sweare*, according to this forme of words, "We professe and declare before *GOD* and the world, "we unfeignedly desire to be humbled for our sins, and for the "sins of these Kingdomes; especially, that we have not, as we "ought, valued the Inestimable benefit of the Gospel; that we "have not endeavoured to receive Christ in our hearts, nor to "walk worthy of Him in our lives, which are the Causes of other "sins and transgressions so much abounding among us; And our "true and unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour for our "selves, and all others under our power and charge, both in publick and in private, in all duties we owe to *GOD* and man, to "amend our lives, and each-one to goe before another in the example of a *Reall Reformation*. Here was a *state* or Nationall Covenant; and loe, here is a *state* or Nationall breach of Covenant;

nant; for to all this (we mention but this, being to our seeming, as simple and unmixt, as *Asa's* Covenant was) we, all the Nation over, lifted up our hands, but now against all this, we all, the generality, or most of us all, have *lifted up the Heel*; and have set our hearts against it, as *firme as a stone*, like the heart of the *Levathan* as hard as a peice of the *neither Millstone*. As doth appeare to every eye, that hath a true discerning, and can behold our walk with in doores or without: our doings in publick or in private.

Therefore will the Lord, for He is the same still reckon of us and account with us, as He hath don with *mighy sinners before Him, dispersers of His oath, and Breakers of Covenant* with Him, for so saith the Lord in a very like case, and as terrible the words are against a Nation, as against that man onely, seeing he despised "th' bath by breaking the Covenant (when loe he had given his "hand) and hath done all these things, he shall not escape. "Therefore thus saith the *LORD GOD, As I live*, surely "MINE Oath that he hath despised, and My Covenant, that "He hath broken, even it will I recompence upon his own head, *Ezek. 17. 18. 19.*

Blessed are all the people, that shall *heare and feare*, be truly humbled for what they have done, if they knew not what they did; pray for Grace continually, that more may be given unto them, whereby they may be *kept-back* from doing any more so presumptuously as once they did, when they lifted up their hands to the *Most High God*, swearing to Him, to performe with Him in those things, they might know, and acknowledge to be *Holy, just, and good*; and yet had no purpose to doe thereafter, yea which they abhorred so to doe; others also lifting up their hands to performe those things, they were *willingly ignorant of*, as they were of the *Law*, they desired to teach, *understanding the whole, neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.*

Notwithstanding from hence, the Conclusion is this, "That if "it was conceived lawfull and needfull for the Church all over the "Nation, to take the Covenant of God into their *mouthes*, when "the most of them, *hated instruction, and cast His words behind "them*; Then may an Holy Nation, a peculiar people, who have "not gon back from the Commandement of His lips: and have esteemed the words of His mouth more than their necessary food, "then

" then may these, where ever they are, Covenant-in, and swear  
 " to the same thing, that they will be the *Lords people*, under-  
 " standing well what they doe, and what they engage, in the  
 " strength of Christ, to stand unto. Yet if any one, that walks  
 humbly, in the feare of his God, be otherwise minded for the  
 present, His God, *whose he is, and whom he serveth, shall revenge*  
*even this unto him.* But if he hath a mind that way, let him look  
 round about him first, before he subscribes his Name, and lifts up  
 his hand to the Most High God, because of this he finds writ-  
 ten

*When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy GOD, thou  
 shalt not slack to pay it; for the Lord thy GOD will surely re-  
 quire it of thee, and it would be sin in thee.* Deut. 23. 21.

Reader, thou shalt now have the last words of a Dying man,  
 and dead to thee, so soone as he has spoken them, therefore let  
 them command thy best observation. Thou maist have met with  
 a fit Contradiction to all our deare Lord hath said, all they also  
 that have spoken from His mouth, in referrence to all Gospel Ad-  
 ministrations, having met with a cursed Pamphlet called *a legall*  
*Resolution of two important Quæries*, so saith the Lawyer; most  
 illegall and irrationall will every man say that reads him, having  
 the use of naturall Reason, not to say a sanctified understanding,  
 as appeares all along, specially at the 11 page. where he takes his  
 comparisons from a Gentlemans Shepherd, his Cooke, Landresse,  
 Groome. And since he refers thee to his foure serious Questions,  
 you may read the marrow of them (like that in a swines bone)  
 in a Book called *some Grand Enquiries*, page 15. to page 22.  
 And having so don, this is the earnest desire (1) that thou takest  
 heed of putting thy finger upon the light of Reason, least the  
 righteous God puts it quite out, as is to be feared he hath don  
 upon this man, and those Ministers of the same judgement with  
 him. And (2) pray for him and them, that *repentance towards*  
*God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ* may be given them,  
 and so the sword removed from off their Arme and right eye.  
 Amen.

FINIS.